

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06

CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-10 IO-10 INT-05

OFA-01 DLOS-04 /127 W

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R 011420Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7015

UNCLAS NASSAU 1239

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, BF, EFIS, ECRP

SUBJECT: GCOB PRESENTS SHORT TERM ECONOMIC PLAN

1. PRIME MINISTER PINDLING ANNOUNCED TO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON WEDNESDAY JULY 30 A \$20 MILLION ECONOMIC PACKAGE DUBBED QUOTE PROJECT IMPACT" DESIGNED TO QUOTE PRIME THE ECONOMIC PUMP AND SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY END QUOTE. THE THRUST OF THE PACKAGE IS TO CREATE AS MUCH EMPLOYMENT AS POSSIBLE AND STIMULATE MONEY CIRCULATION THROUGH PROGRAMS IN AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, HOUSING, PUBLIC WORKS FOR THE FAMILY ISLANDS AND WATER FOR NEW PROVIDENCE.

2. EMBASSY COMMENT: GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL IS OBVIOUSLY AN ATTEMPT TO STEM CRITICISM AND HOPEFULLY RESOLVE SOME OF MORE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS WHICH MOST DIRECTLY AFFECT INDIVIDUALS E.G. THE VOTERS. GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY RECEIVED INCREASINGLY INTENSE CRITICISM ON THEIR FAILURE TO COPE WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC PROBLEM - ESPECIALLY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND THE CRITICAL WATER SHORTAGE ON NEW PROVIDENCE. GCOB IS STILL A LONG WAY FROM COMPLETION OF LONG RANGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (A UN CONSULTANT HAS JUST ARRIVED FOR A YEAR'S STAY TO ASSIST WITH WRITING

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OF PLAN) AND PROJECT IMPACT CAN BE VIEWED AS A STOP GAP

MEASURE.

3. EMBASSY WILL REPORT IN DETAIL ON ECONOMIC PACKAGE IN AIRGRAM TO FOLLOW. OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST, HOWEVER, ARE PLANS OUTLINED FOR FISHERIES AND DISCUSSION ON SPINY LOBSTER LEGISLATION WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING PM'S PRESENTATION OF PLAN. FOLLOWING ARE MAJOR POINTS:

4. FISHEREIS: THE PM ANNOUNCED LONG TERM PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY WHICH WOULD BE QUOTE OWNED AND OPERATED BY BAHAMIANS END QUOTE. DEVELOPMENT PLANS INCLUDE: BUILD UP OF AN ADEQUATE FISHING FLEET; PROVISION OF FISH HANDLING FACILITIES AT POTTER'S CAY (NASSAU); INSTALLATION OF FREEZERS AND HOLDING PLANTS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF DOCKING AND PROCESSING FACILITIES IN SPECIFIC FAMILY ISLANDS. THE GCOB WILL SPEND AN ESTIMATED \$20,000 ON FISHING GEAR FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR. THE PM ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD QUOTE RESERVED THE CONTINENTAL SHELF FOR BAHAMIAN FISHERMAN AND WOULD MAKE AVAILABLE PREFABRICATED TRAPS AT COST FOR CRAWFISHING END QUOTE.

5. DURING DISCUSSIONS OF SPINY LOBSTER INDUSTRY AND LEGISLATION PM SAID THEY WOULD NEED 300 BAHAMIAN BOATS FOR THE CRAWFISH SEASON WHICH WOULD PROVIDE JOBS FOR 2000 AND THAT SPIN OFF INDUSTRIES SUCH AS ON SHORE CLEANING AND PROCESSING, AND BUILDING AND MAINTAINING BOATS WOULD PROVIDE OVER 2500 ADDITIONAL JOBS.

6. PM STATED THAT THERE WERE APPROX 500 CUBAN AMERICAN BOATS FISHING IN BAHAMIAN WATER DURING CRAWFISH SEASON, EACH WITH AN AVERAGE OF 4 MEN PER BOAT. HE CHARACTERIZED THE INDUSTRY AS LUCRATIVE ESTIMATING AN AVERAGE YEARLY INCOME FOR CUBAN AMERICAN FISHERMEN AS BETWEEN \$8000 AND 12000.

7. BOTH PM AND MINISTER OF AGRICURE AND FISHERIES ANTHONY ROBERTS GAVE HARD LINE ON ENFORCEMENT. PM PROMISED THAT QUOTE SOONER OR LATER THE VIOLATORS WILL GET THEIR JUST REWARDS END QUOTE. HE ALSO ENCOURAGED BAHAMIANS TO ASSIST THE AUTHORITIES IN REPORTING ALL ILLEGAL FISHING. ROBERTS STATED THAT QUOTE WITH SUFFICIENT DETERMINATION GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO STOP POACHING AND THAT MAY BE IN THE NO TOO DISTANT FUTURE END QUOTE. HE ALSO MENTIONED

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LEGISLATION BEING PREPARED IN LEGAL DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE PENALTIES FOR USING ILLEGAL METHODS OF FISHING E.G. MECHANICALLY POWERED SPEAR GUNS, BLEACH AND DYNAMAITE. WEISS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHING INDUSTRY, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NASSAU01239
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750266-0787
From: NASSAU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750890/aaaadbwt.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JAN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JAN 2003 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <12 JAN 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GCOB PRESENTS SHORT TERM ECONOMIC PLAN
TAGS: ECON, EFIS, ECRP, BF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006